

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 041214Z SEP 76 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6757

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11954

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, EG, IS, US, XE

SUBJ: ISRAELI GUN BOATS PREVENT RETURN OF MARINER TO SITE

304.1

REF CAIRO 11949, TEL AVIV 6095,

SUMMARY: AT 1240 CRAIF OF AMOCO CALLED EMBASSY TO PROVIDE FEW MORE DETAILS ON THIS MORNING'S INCIDENT AND TO ASK FOR INFO ABOUT ISRAELI POSITION ON THIS ISSUE. RECOMMEND WE GIVE AMOCO SUBSTANCE OF AMB TOON'S DISCUSSION WITH ALLON (TEL AVIV 6095), THAT WE MAKE FURTHER DEMARCHE TO ISRAELIS, AND THAT WE LEAVE WITH AMOCO DECISION AS TO HOW TO PROCEED.
END SUMMARY

1. CRAIG REPORTED THERE WAS NOTHING NEW IN PRESENT IMPASSE, BUT CONFIRMED THAT MARINER, WHEN INTERCEPTED, WAS ON LOCATION AT SITE 304.1 BUT STILL UNDER TOW OF WORK BOATS AND ANCHORS HAD NOT BEEN ATTACHED. EGYPTIAN GUN BOATS HAD APPEARED VERY SHORTLY AFTER MARINER HAD BEGUN TO MOVE AWAY FROM SITE UNDER ORDERS FROM ISRAELI GUN BOAT.

2. WITH REGARD TO BUOYS AT SITE 304.1, THERE WERE FOUR ANCHOR BUOYS WHICH WERE PROPERTY OF SANTA FE COMPANY AND ITS SHIP MARINER PLUS ONCE LOCATION BUOY BELONGING TO GUPCO. IF
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BUOYS HAVE IN FACT BEEN SUNK, WHICH HE DID NOT KNOW TO

BE THE CASE, IT WOULD TAKE AMOCO WORK BOATS ABOUT ONE AND ONE-HALF DAYS TO DRAG FOR THE ANCHORS AND RESET THE BUOYS. CRAIG VIEWED SUCH ACTION, IF ACTUALLY TAKEN, AS AN ANNOYANCE BUT NOT SOMETHING THAT COULD NOT BE CORRECTED IN RELATIVELY SHORT TIME.

3. CRAIG WENT ON TO ASK WHETHER USG HAD SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING ISRAEL "FINAL OFFICIAL POSITION" ON MARINER'S DRILLING IN SITE 304.1. HE ASKED WHETHER THIS MORNING'S ACTIONS WERE ONLY ISRAELI HARASSMENT OR WERE THEY DETERMINED TO PROVENT AMOCO FROM DRILLING AT SITE. HE SAID AMOCO WOULD NOT ACCEPT ISRAELI POSITION THAT IT COULD NOT DRILL BUT AT SAME TIME MARINER CAPTAIN WOULD NOT RETURN TO SITE SO LONG AS EITHER ISRAELI OR EGYPTIAN GUN BOATS WERE IN THE AREA. CRAIG ASKED FOR OUR INFORMATION ON ISRAELI POSITION. WE DID NOT FEEL WE SHOULD PROVIDE CRAIG WITH INFORMATION IN TEL AVIV 6095 WITHOUT DEPT AUTHORIZATION.

4. RECOMMENDATION: WE RECOMMEND THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE CRAIG AND THAT DEPT PROVIDE AMOCO HEAD OFFICE WITH ALLON'S STATEMNTS AS TO WHAT ISRAEL WOULD DO ABOUT THE MARINER SHOULD IT RETURN TO 304.1 ALONG LINES THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT HARASS OR FIRE ON THE VESSEL BUT WOULD NOT MAKE THINGS EASY FOR IT, INCLUDING APPROPRIATE QUOTATIONS FROM TEL AVIV 6095. WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO AMOCO THAT DECISION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT TO PROCEED IN DRILLING MUST BE MADE BY AMOCO IN LIGHT OF THE INFO WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM ISRAELIS, IN LIGHT OF AMOCO'S CONCESSIONARY RELATIONS WITH GOE, AND IN LIGHT OF AMOCO'S OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION. AT SAME TIME, WE BELIEVE THAT FURTHER EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE WITH RABIN TO REASSERT OUR POSITION AS GIVEN IN STATE 218121 AND TO MAKE CLEAR THAT ISRAELIS CANNOT CONTINUE TO TEMPORIZE AND THAT FAVORABLY RESOLUTION OF MATTER CANNOT AWAIT ALLON'S FUTURE DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON. EILTS

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